

Diocesan Schools Commissioners **Directors of Religious Education**

Statutory Relationship and Sex Education

Today the Government has announced that they are tabling two amendments to the Children and Social Work Bill. The Amendments will require:

- All primary schools in England to teach age-appropriate 'relationships education'; and
- All secondary schools in England to teach age-appropriate 'relationships and sex education'

The Government have confirmed that:

- Parents will continue to have a right to withdraw their children from sex education.
- Schools will have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs of the local community;
- Schools will continue to be able to teach in accordance with the tenets of their faith.

The CES will be involved in the development of any new guidance and there will be a public consultation for any regulations and statutory guidance. The new changes are expected to come into effect in September 2019.

For information please see below for the statement from the CES in response to today's announcement:

Catholic Education Service welcomes Government announcement on RSE

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP KC*HS, Chairman of the Catholic Education Service said;

“Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) forms part of the mission of Catholic schools to educate the whole person. Our schools have a long track record of educating young people who are prepared for adult life as informed and engaged members of society, and high quality RSE plays an important part of this.

“We welcome the Government's commitment to improving Relationship and Sex Education in all schools. Catholic schools already teach age-appropriate Relationship and Sex Education in both primary and secondary schools. This is supported by a Catholic model RSE curriculum which covers the RSE curriculum from nursery all the way through to sixth form.

“We additionally welcome the Government's commitment to protect parental right of withdrawal and involve parents in all stages of the development and delivery of RSE in all schools. It is essential that parents fully support the school's approach to these sensitive matters. The experience of Catholic schools is that parental involvement is the basis for providing consistent and high quality RSE at home and at school.

“We look forward to working closely with the Government to shape any new guidance to enable Catholic schools to continue to deliver outstanding RSE, in accordance with parents' wishes and Church teaching.”

Marie Southall
Assistant Director